

VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

The Volunteer (Eng.) Service Gazette, having published at various times statistics of the volunteer corps in England, Wales, and Scotland, has the following remarks upon the position held by three branches of the service:—"The light horse, who stand first in order of precedence, furnish 11 corps and 843 enrolled members, and are distributed over eight counties, 63 per cent of these rank as efficient, and 55 per cent as extra efficient. In point of numbers the list is headed by the well-known Huntingdon corps, with a fair number of efficient, on the other hand, we are sorry to see that the Gloucester corps returns a blank of efficient. The mounted rifles, whom, though by strict rank they come after the artillery and engineers, it will be convenient to notice here, send 384 enrolled members, dispersed among seven corps and five counties, the largest of them being the only Scotch representative. One return has not been received. They have 73 per cent efficient, and consequently beat the light horse by 10. On the whole, then, we have 1227 volunteer horsemen, a number which, with the English passion for fox-hunting and steeple-chasing, we cannot help thinking ought to be largely increased. To show that real sport is to be obtained out of the mounted drill, we have only to refer to the accounts which have appeared in this paper of the inspections of the famous Hants mounted rifles, and of field days of the Duke of Manchester's corps. Only one county, Devon, puts in an appearance in both lists, she has three corps of each class, and numbering in all 298, stands at the head of our cavalry force. The artillery, who come next, we have always looked upon as a most important feature in our ranks. The annual meeting at Shoeburyness comes next only to Wimbledon in point of interest to volunteers, and we are glad to say that the service of the big guns is continuously increasing. The number of counties, using the term of course in its volunteer sense, who support artillery corps is in England 32, with 129 corps; in Wales 4, with 9 corps; and in Scotland 26, with 74 corps. The force is thus widely scattered, and that the drill is deservedly popular is shown by the high rate of efficient which is returned, being 80 per cent in England, 88 in Wales, and 82 in Scotland, making 81 per cent over all. There are some interesting cases in these tables, which show that it is not only the smaller detachments which can return a goodly array of efficient. Lancashire, which heads the English list in point of numbers, with 6011, stands second in the efficient list, with 93 per cent; while in Scotland, Lanarkshire, which has her whole strength united into a single brigade, ranks first in both lists, with 1274 enrolled members, and nearly 99 per cent of these efficient. The counties with a seaboard claim, of course, a privileged interest in artillery, and the opportunities they have of practice are greatly in their favor; but we observe that there are several inland counties who have prepared themselves to take part in the duty of manning and defending our forts and garrisons, and perhaps some playful experience of this kind may be given this year at Dover, as part of our Easter Monday campaign. England, we find, has a complement of 23,775 artillerymen, Wales (with one return outstanding), 1152; and Scotland, 8761; making in all 33,688, and of these the so-called inefficient number less than one-fifth.

The engineers, a smaller body, it also an increasing one, are distributed among 11 counties, with 17 corps. They are spotted chiefly throughout England, Scotland having only one and Wales. The number this year is 5233, and of these 83 per cent are returned efficient, and 76 per cent extra efficient. But these tables point out the weak as well as the strong; and it is with great regret that we see that the last three in point of efficiency are Middlesex, the Tower Hamlets, and City of London. We ask our Metropolitan volunteers, whether they may not take a lesson from some of the large towns

in the north? It is true that among the engineers, Lancashire stands but one place above Middlesex, but that place represents no slight difference, as the figures show."

FRENCH COMPLIMENTS TO ENGLAND.

The Paris 'Avenir Nationale' has the following:—"The English, who are perhaps at this moment the only people of calm judgment in all Europe, are asking themselves if the possession of Luxemburg would compensate for the misfortunes which must inevitably result from a war between France and Germany. There is no need to say what is their answer. The 'Times' does not think that the possession of Luxemburg is essential to either of the powers who seem to wish to dispute it with arms in their hands. France, mistress of Luxemburg, would appear to it however a menace to Belgium and, up to a certain point, to England though this does not in the least mean that she thinks of departing from her neutrality. We give the opinion of the English for what it is worth; the discredit into which that opinion has for some time fallen is well-known; the great politicians have come to take no more account of it than of that of a third, or even a fourth-rate power, if there are any. 'It is not surprising,' say they, 'that a power which systematically stands aloof from all the great European questions should not understand the importance of the Luxemburg question; in that isolation England will end by losing the little prestige she had left—FINIS BRITANNIÆ.' To which the English might reply—'If to systematically stand aloof from all the great European questions is to give rise to none, evidently your reproach is well founded. If to be one of the richest, the most intelligent, and above all, one of the freest nations in the world, is not sufficient to give prestige, we certainly have none; however we do very well without any. Happy the nations whose governments have no need of prestige. To attain the vague object which you trace out with that name, England would need an army of four or five hundred thousand men without counting her navy; after that, no more budgets with a surplus, or even an equilibrium but an increase of burdens which the government could not impose upon the nation without producing one of those questions of which you speak, and which are only European in this sense, that they threaten the great interest of civilization in Europe. We are without prestige, if you will; but we are rich, free, happy, and, if attacked it would soon be seen that we have some troops and vessels left capable of defending, although without prestige, our native land, and domestic hearths. As for you, fight and run yourselves since you call that prestige.' The great politicians will shrug their shoulders. We consider the British reasoning not without sound sense."

FOREIGN MILITARY NEWS.

BREECH-LOADERS FOR THE FRENCH.—During the last few weeks orders for 40,000 breech-loading muskets have been received by the manufacturers in England from the French Government. Large numbers have been delivered, and the remainder are being completed with the utmost expedition.

NEW FORM OF GUN-COTTON.—Messrs Prentice, of Stowmarket, have invented and brought to a considerable approach to perfection a new form of gun-cotton. The cotton is reduced to a pulp, and then made into either grains or discs. It is said by the 'Pall Mall Gazette' that sportsmen of note have expressed high opinions of its propelling powers, its freedom from smoke and recoil, and even in many instances of its regularity of action.

THE SNIDER RIFLE.—The Snider breech-loading rifle has been adopted as the military arm of England, Belgium, Turkey, and Egypt. Out of a total of 94,840 rounds fired in experiment trials at Woolwich, with this weapon, the total failures, including missing the target at 500 yards, amounted to 341.

A new gunboat, named the 'Cromer,' was launched from the Portsmouth gunboat yard on the 23rd ult. Her dimensions are the same as the 'Cherub' and 'Minstrel,' previously launched from Haslar, and she was named by the daughter of the master builder of Portsmouth Dockyard, H. Cradock, Esq.

NEW REGULATIONS FOR VOLUNTEER CLASS FIRE.—The new regulations for the musketry instruction of the army are to be applied to the Volunteer force. The material alterations are—that recruits will fire their first period at 50, 100, 150, and 200 yards, instead of at 150, 200, 250, and 300 yards; and that in firing at target-class ranges any position may be used, instead of the men, as at present, being compelled to fire from the knee in the Hythe position.

THE HEROES OF LUCKNOW.—The 11th Brigade Field Artillery, on return from the East Indies, have just landed at Dover, and proceeded to Shorncliffe. They had been engaged in the Lucknow campaign, and had been out for many years. Among the arrivals was a remarkably fine specimen of the black bear of India (*Ursus monstrosus*), which was captured in the jungle in the Bengal Presidency. He was captured when a cub, and has now lost all his carnivorous propensities. The collection of birds is splendid. There are parrots, paroquets, cockatoos, the yellow legged oiaia, and some of the most beautiful specimens of the Eastern land.—[London Globe.]

DROGHEDA, which was attacked by the Fenians during the last rising, is already famous in the annals of Irish history. It was a principal rendezvous for the forces which were so frequently required in Ulster between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1649 it was stormed by Cromwell and its garrison put to the sword, and in 1690 it resisted the attack of a division of King William's army. Within two miles of its walls—some remains of which only now exist—was fought the famous "Battle of the Boyne." Castle Martyr, also mentioned in despatches, is 18 miles from the city of Cork in that county. Its population is nearly 1500.

THE MEDITERRANEAN FLEET.—The iron-clads in the Mediterranean fleet are: The Prince Consort, 35, Capt. Inglefield; the Ocean, 24, Capt. C. S. Stanhope; the Royal Oak, 34, Capt. the Hon. G. D. Keane; the Resistance, 18, Capt. Hillyar, and the Enterprise, 4, Com. G. S. Bosanquet. The flagship of Lord Clarence Paget, the Admiral in command of the Mediterranean station, is the Victoria, screw, 102. There are several frigates and smaller vessels of war in the fleet. Among the frigates there are the Arethusa, 39, the Endymion, 21, and Galatea, 26, commanded by the Duke of Edinburgh, may also be counted as one of the Mediterranean command. Besides, there are the Cruiser, the Cockatrice, the Canard, the Tyrian, the Racer, the Phryce, the Hydra, and the Wizard.—Gibraltar Chronicle.

GALLANT CONDUCT OF A VOLUNTEER.—As Geo. Loudon, full private 101st Royal Lancashire Volunteers, was returning with his masters horse and gig from Motherwell to Newarthill a short time since, he was obstructed on his way between Corsington Brig and Clerk-hill Toll by three sturdy fellows who would not get out of the way, one of whom latterly seized the horse, while the other two surrounded the machine. George applied the whip, and the horse springing to the call, the shaft of the